

Nº4



NORMAL

THE NUDE MALE

Pato Rivero • Olivier Valsecchi • Hans Withoos • François Rousseau
DDiArte • Aurelio Monge • Connie Imoden

N O R M A L

ÉDITION LIMITÉE

N^o4

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FOREWORD

**“I am an extremely
decent man. Actually
it’s indecent how
decent I am.**

Serge Gainsbourg

Pensées, provocos et autres volutes (2006)

Looking closely on the internet, searching in book stores or going to libraries – which I have to admit, I tend to do less and less – the nude male associated with Art or anything related to it, is absent.

No significant publication covers this art form or treats of its numerous representations in various civilisations throughout the ages. Too few have dared and too many have failed (the few exceptions being Alain Corbin, Emmanuel Cooper and Alex Potts).

This unfathomable absence can easily be observed when typing these words on Google: “male nude” or “naked man art” (in English or French). So you can imagine my demise when I searched for “representations of the male nude in art history. Why isn’t the male nude a source of fascination and why isn’t it approached as such? Is there a heightened sexual connotation? Is there still a form of censorship, of shyness towards this art? For it is an art!

Having studied the subject for several years now, I can find numerous consequential publications on the female nude, and its representation is debated in various media-- essays, documentaries, news articles, books, publications, with interpretations and a wide array of hare-brained ideas. But on male nudity: nothing! I’m exaggerating: almost nothing. As if this evident deprivation was only to echo the inherent poverty by which nudity itself is characterised.

Having always been keen to treat this subject, and despite realising the acknowledged vacuity on the subject, we have tried to do it justice. When we launched our photographic research, we realised that, as opposed to the female nude, the subject was only approached by a handful of great world-renowned photographers and that their work was for almost all of them referenced and labelled as such. Nevertheless, and as our search continued, we discovered hidden photographs and talents, some of which are featured in the following pages.



PARTIE I

Viewing the male nude as a normal

PATO RIVERO

Psychoanalysis and appropriation of tales and legends

Born in Argentina, Pato Rivero comes from San Miguel de Tucumán, in the country's North East region. He studied graphic design and had a particular interest in photography, which became his means of expression. This keen interest lead the young man to leave his city of birth to move to Buenos Aires in order to enrol at the Andy Goldstein School of photography (Escuela de Fotografia Creativa). It's precisely in the Argentinean capital where Pato Rivero started his career as photographer. A self-taught musician, painter and drawing artist, he developed a style synthesising all these disciplines in the structure of his images.

Having an intuitive understanding of colour and lighting, he distinguished himself also by a very unique technique of film processing. He collaborated with several famous Argentinean designers, particularly in his "Erase una vez" series (Once upon a time) where each image is styled by a different designer. Rivero also widened his experience by working for the theatre, the fashion industry and in television. Since 2009, he's been working as Photographic Editor for OLV Magazine - El Mundo del Olivo (The Olive Tree's World), an Argentine and Uruguayan publication. The male nude is the most representative element of Rivero's work. In the stories he depicts in his

images, we can find numerous references to fairy tales (Charles Peyrault, the Grimm brothers and Hans Christian Andersen). According to fellow artist and compatriot Juan Batalla, there is nothing natural in Pato Rivero's shots. The images are created from beginning to end and offer a totally artificial vision which becomes a permanent feature and eventually the principal and most recognisable characteristic of his work. His use of darkness and light creates such a contrast as to portray the characters as living statues. The shadows have a vivid presence and out of their darkness, we feel the stirrings of strange forces. Through this process, the unrealistic becomes sublimated by the photographer. Batalla perceives in his peer's work the baroque spirit of Caravaggio. In his nude photography, Rivero launches in a dramatic contrast between violence and stillness. Pato Rivero's stance is best described by Rosa Olivares, Editor of Exit magazine: "In all these tales and magical stories, there is a new process of transformation from childhood to adulthood. Problems are solved according to the characters' perseverance and qualities such as courage, loyalty, kindness, love and responsibility. These qualities are the springboard making it possible to face a very dangerous and ever-changing landscape."









Can you describe your style, as a good friend would ?

In Pato's work, each element is carefully selected, with a very clear goal in the artist's mind. Nothing is left to chance. The elements are combined in order to produce powerful symbolic images. His style is baroque, taking his author back to childhood memories, but also bearing a provoking and more mature side. This is a very good way to revisit one's memories as an adult, far from the naive spirit that children may have.

What are your main influences ?

I have a boundless admiration for Italian painters like Michelangelo, Raphael and Caravaggio. They are the inspiration for a good part of the figurative aspect of my work. Of course, there is also the use of chiaroscuro by other baroque painters. As I studied the manner in which they played with light, it opened-up my creative abilities, specifically regarding lighting effects.

As far as literature goes, I am always on the look-out for books on legends, tales and traditions. I have widened my scope by adding texts from other South American countries. To me, cinema is a necessity- from classic to contemporary films, whether they be national or international. There are movies that I'll watch more than once, like Sally Porter's Orlando, Ridley Scott's Blade Runner or Michel Haneke's The Piano Teacher. They represent the artistic genre I am receptive to, from their aesthetic aspect to the incredible diversity in which stories are told.

Why so many references to tales and legends ?

Both my father and my aunt took it upon themselves to awaken in me a taste for tales and legends. Reading them instilled some values in me. These readings are very significant for me. They represent a world where the imagination has no limit and where perseverance is triumphant. The legends from the North of my country usually come to us from a popular, oral tradition. In images such as Apacheta de Leyendas (pages 12, 18 and 26), I try to generate a curiosity for these stories, which I feel belong to me. They should never be forgotten, because they justified that which couldn't be explained and dealt with the fears and hopes of a different era.

How do your pictures come to life ?

I am a whimsical child. Images come to me all the time. But in a photographic series, it is essential to start with a single image. It has to be the main thread, the title on which to base the rest of the series. It will set the pace for the whole project. It is fundamental for me to know on a deep level what it is I want to say. Then, I can decide whether I wish to focus on the nude body, on clothes, on the setting, or on the general feeling, because they will set the mood, in the same way the aperture, speed and the ISO.

Any passions ?

I tend to collect a lot of things. I like books as objects. I value them. I enjoy

everything about them, from the harmonious colours of their covers to the grain of their pages. Some, like Emigrants by Shaun Tan or Boca del Lobo by Fabián Negrin, are must-read classics for me. I also like comic books, like all the Marvels and DCcomics... the types that my older brothers used to read. Now I collect more contemporary authors, and last night I started to read The Sandman by Neil Gaiman.

Any obsessions ?

I try to communicate in details the idea I wish to convey, to those accompanying me in my work- the make-up artists, stylists, models. That process is crucial to me. I take note of their feedback and contributions because, essentially, we work as a team. But I always give my instinct priority because, in the end, it has the last word.

What is a good photo ?

I usually tend to see the glass half full, when looking at a photo. Some of them, I only like because of their impeccable technique, others for their delicacy, others still because they simply move me. Of course, I have some preferences in terms of beauty standards, but I try to stay open-minded and to see something in each of them. I do not have a favourite photo, but I admire some photographers, like Pierre & Gilles, Richard Avedon or Steven Meisel.

What does photography mean to you ?

I am surprised by its span. I believe it

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is the greatest tool for those wishing to express themselves. It can deal with simplicity, conflicts, life and death. It can suggest long narratives or shorten others. I think we should all go through this experience at least once in our lives.

Why does the male body inspire you ?

I come from a pretty structured society and it is for this reason that I chose the male nude as a personal, internal work, in order to demystify nudity. It was one thing, amongst others, which helped me evolve as a human being, as an artist, while remaining in tune with myself. We need to allow ourselves to look upon male nudity the same way we look at female nudity– with admiration and peace of mind.

Une citation ?

“He left behind him small traces of his presence in this world, only visible to those who know where to look”

El Laberinto del fauno
Guillermo del Toro
2006

Studio or exterior ?

At the beginning, I preferred working in closed areas or studios, where I could control the lighting completely. Then I learned to enjoy the light available outside. Today, I use this space for variation.

Any projects ?

I am starting a series of portraits from people living the North of my country. This time, I will create their clothes by using fabrics and accessories from this particular region. I am curious of everything and I like to think that I do not stick to a single subject, but I was happy working in Tucumán, around themes from my native land, where I regularly go back.



THE DAY OF MY DEATH

In a city, Trieste or Udine,
along an avenue of lindens ,
when the leaves change
colour in spring,
I shall fall down dead
under a sun burning
blond and high
and close my eyes,
leaving the sky to its light.

Under a linden warm with green
I shall fall into the black
of death, which the sun
and lindens will dispel.
Beautiful boys
will run in the light
that I've just left,
flying out of the schools,
curls falling onto their brows.

I shall be still young
in a bright shirt
my sweet hair streaming
in the bitter dust.
I shall be still warm,
and a boy running down
the asphalt avenue
shall lay a hand upon
my crystal lap.









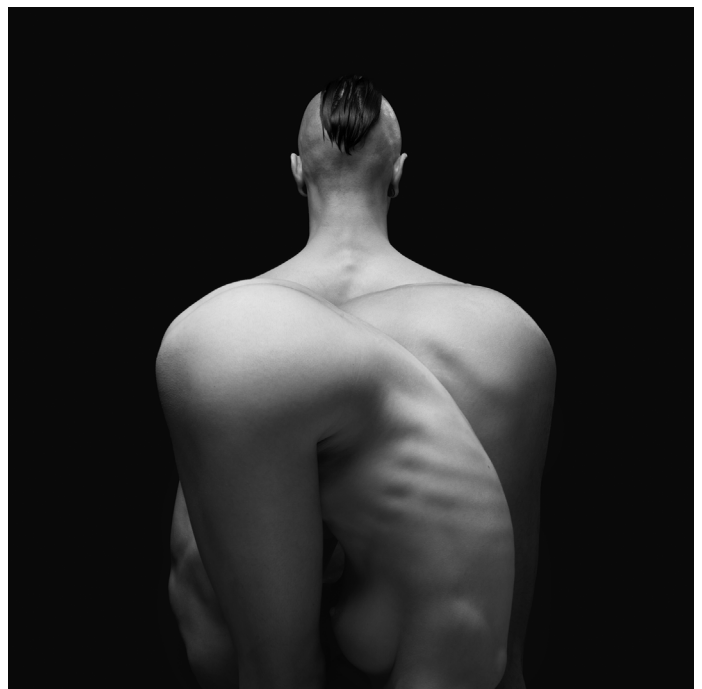
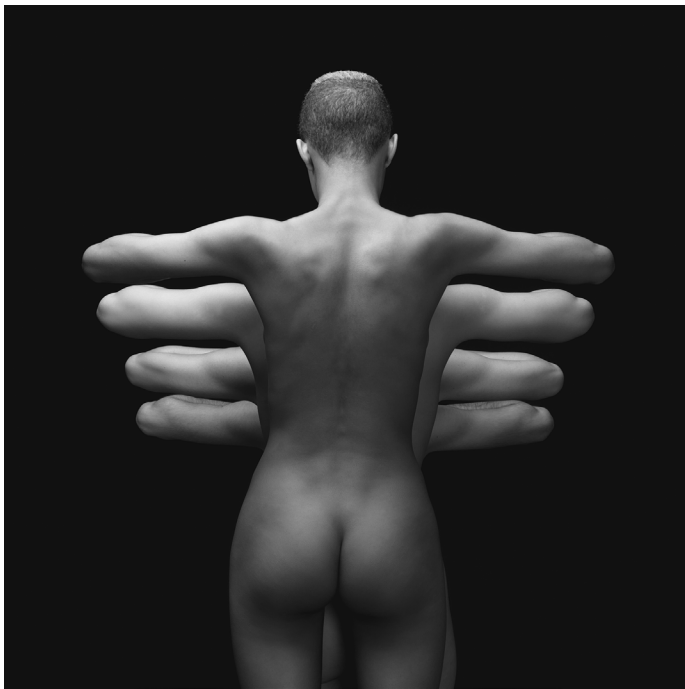


OLIVIER VASECCHI



Born in Paris in 1979, Olivier Valsecchi is a French photographer, now living in Toulouse. Olivier first had an interest for musical creation, before moving to photography and self-portraits. For a few years now, he's been focusing on the human body, and allies photography and statuary. With his use of light, a certain energy bursts out of his pictures. In 2010, his series DUST (pages 36 and 37) gets him noticed and wins him the Hasselblad Masters Award in 2012. Clearly inspired by the chaos theory, this series displays a chiaroscuro coming straight out of the Renaissance. His twisted bodies are draped in a cloud of dust, giving them a surreal, nebula-like aspect, a symbol for

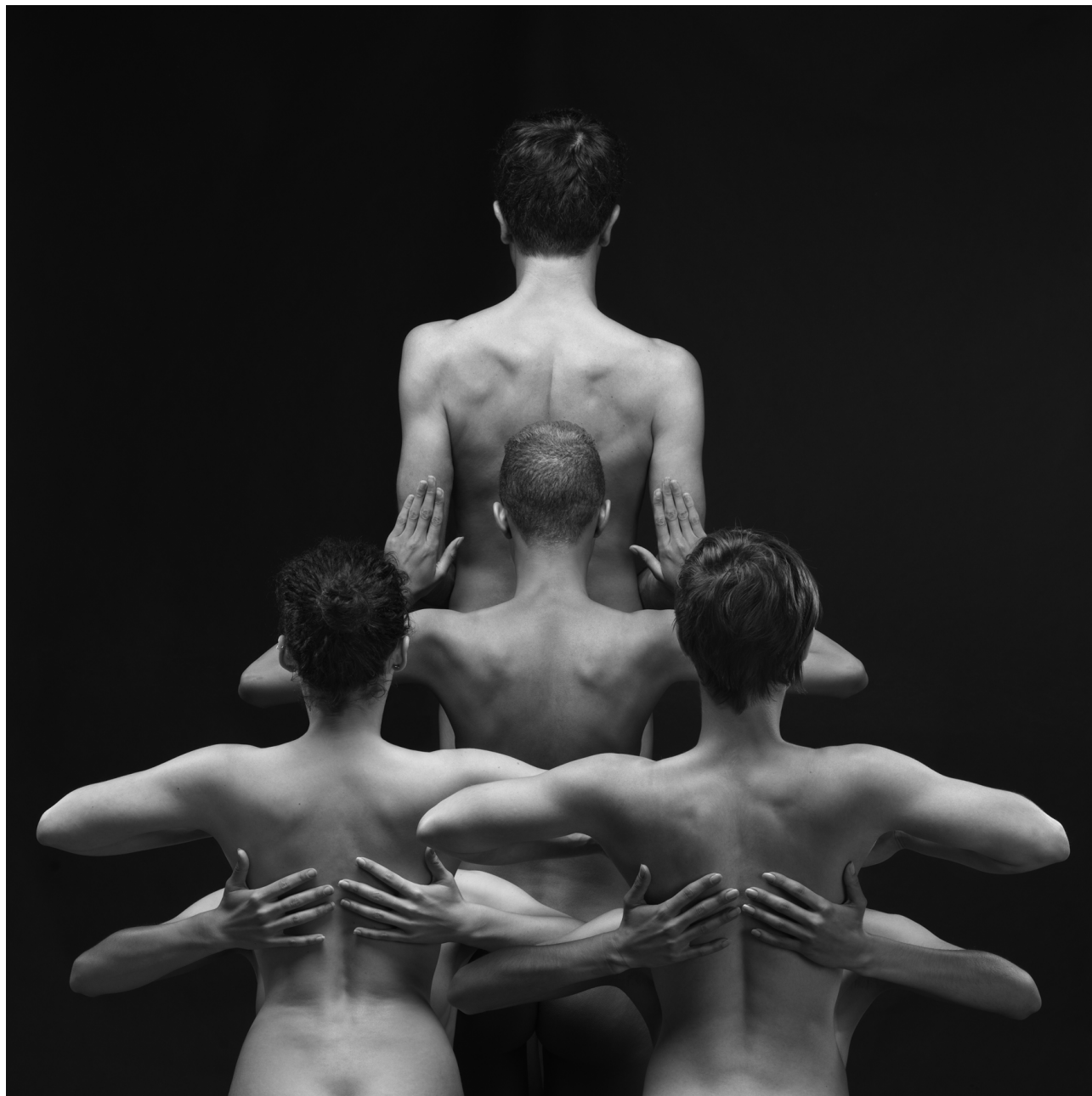
birth and death. In his following series called Klecksography (see opposite), he pursues this body-sculpture idea, inspired by Swiss-born Hermann Rorschach's method which consisted of using ink stains on paper in order to reveal possible dementia or schizophrenia in his patients. Olivier then decides to give full rein to what he calls "the enemy within", the part of darkness which dwells inside all of us. In 2012, in his third series TIME OF WAR, the French photographer keeps the DUST technique, but leaves the chaos behind for a world of transmigration. Olivier Valsecchi's work generates a constantly growing interest in photographic circles, whether it be in the press or among curators.





« I take photographs
to avoid madness »

Jane Evelyn Atwood





What is Olivier Valsecchi's style ?

I like it when a photograph doesn't strictly look like a photograph, when it breaks away from reality, from the norm. I love the work of Ken Hermann and Jim Naughten, who treat reporting photography as Fine Art.

I've heard my work being described this way: "It's difficult to describe it. You need to see it," and I like it because I never forget that photography is a visual art, so it must first speak to the eye before it speaks to the ear.

I would say that I combine opposites: beauty and the bizarre, classicism and abstraction, the simple and the spectacular. My photographic style leans towards drawing, sculpture, painting, performance. I try to embrace several art forms in a single image. Personal style evolves throughout one's career, depending on the changes at work within yourself. If it weren't the case, we'd end-up doing the same thing over and over again, right?

What are your artistic influences (cinema, literature, art...)?

My artistic influences are not immediately noticeable in my own work. I would rather say I've developed some sort of familiarity with some artists I find mesmerizing and free, like David Lynch, Nina Hagen or Kafka- artists who have created their own universe and chosen their own path. In photography per say, I would mention Jeff Bark: real work on light, precise and meticulous. To me, he enhances photography's definition, which is to write with light.

What do you find inspiring in the body ?

I don't think of it in those terms. The body is a material I will put into the light in order to create a picture. Of course, it is more interesting than plastic or clay, because it reveals intimacy and because it is the only thing the model and I have in common from the off-set: our bodies. Therefore I can project myself and identify with it. But the body is

not necessarily what I am looking for, neither is its emotion. That is the role of nude photography. For my part, I look for the emotion of the picture itself. It's a completely different work. The body must blend into my picture. It is the object, not the subject of the picture.

What interests me is to confront realism with surrealism. Think of it as a creation of a parallel universe made out of elements from the real world. Flesh, muscles and nerves are the elements that bring reality to my fantasy world.

Is there one aspect of photography which disturbs or shocks you ?

This magazine is, what, 200 pages? It wouldn't be enough for me to answer all your questions! I would describe my profession as sweet agony: you love it or you hate it... that's just the way it is. Practicing it implies dealing with inevitable constraints, choosing your environment comes a load of nuisance, and one must learn not to be affected or paralysed by those things.

When I hear talented photographers say they are tired of fighting, that it's not worth it, that the path is too long, it bothers me because it speaks for the state of chaos they work in, and that's a terrible dynamic to be in. Like De Noirmont and Lambert, both closing their galleries the same year, invoking an unhealthy environment, an obsession with prices and the supremacy of money over the love of art, with all the anxiety that this generates in young gallery owners... All this is a very crude reflection of what has become of the high circles of the industry and it may affect all other levels.

Here and there, I hear about "the public's growing lack of interest..." I disagree with that phrase. The public loves photography, but maybe doesn't adhere to what's been offered these past few years. You must understand that we can't shun the public and at the same time moan over deserted vernissages. You cannot seduce anyone by staring at your own belly-button. There is a problem of direction and connection

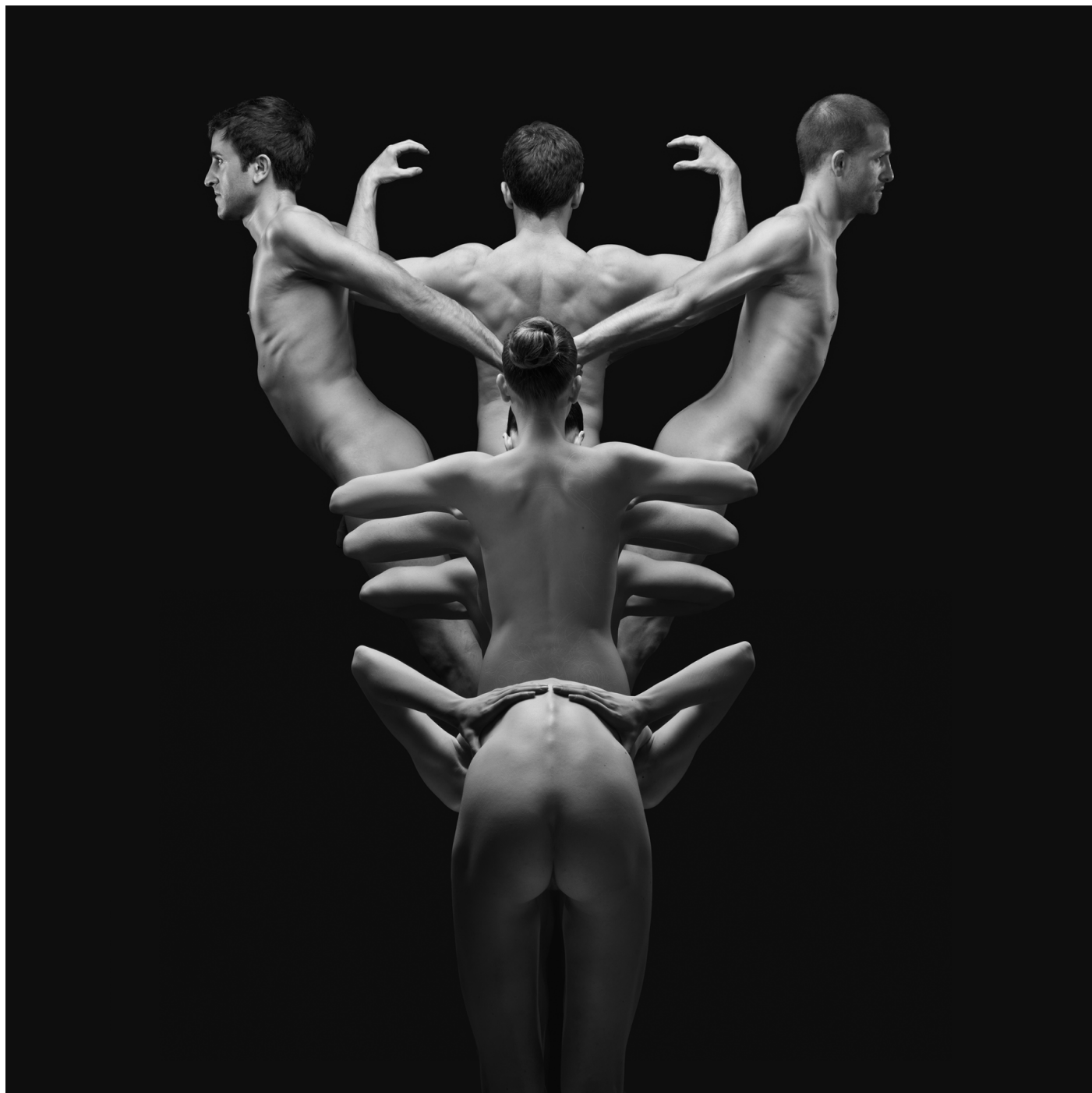
with our time. By force-feeding a blend of photography and contemporary art (which, everybody knows, tends to rub most people the wrong way), by preferring "approaches" to the quality of artworks, by getting bogged down in philosophical meanderings on the intimacy of space... they have stifled the very idea of photography. They've taken photography out of photography itself, if I may say so. It must be reconnected to itself in order to be reunited with the public. It is a long-term investment to educate people this way. But if you lose them in the early lessons, it's because the lesson material isn't good.

Last year, I attended a conference Agathe Gaillard gave as one of her books came out. Agathe Gaillard had a vision and she went with it, from her postcards to the museum. A gallery is like an artist who builds a collective artwork, for and with other artists, for and with art collectors. Through her gallery, Agathe has spent her whole life defending photography's giants: Boubat, Cartier-Bresson, Faucon, Kertesz, Riboud... I look ahead and struggle to identify tomorrow's giants and art requires giants: they serve as the driving force behind everybody else, they open doors, kindle desires and create energies.

"This is a for a different era," some might say, but it is struggling to function. I know some young art collectors looking in vain for "their gallery", meaning, a gallery that can accompany them in their desires without imposing anything. They may find it in New York, the place for creative suggestions. New York is plugged-in to what is happening in real time, New York is not afraid of real talent and doesn't wait for a decade. There are hundreds of very talented photographers nobody sees in France. Why is that?

How do you pick the right photo ?

One doesn't pick the right photo. The photo chooses itself. It goes, "Hi! It's me!" and, needless to say, you're screwed! It's as simple as that. Among a pile of pictures, it stands out far above the others.



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In my case, it's fairly simple: I take a lot of shots, even if it doesn't seem like it because I do not show many of them. I work on short formats, series of 12 images approximately, like a music album, because it is the ideal format to set a scene, to explore a theme, looking for images that exist on their own as well as within a series, keeping the tension high. So short format requires a particular kinds of expectations. I do some research within a specific frame of work, I create a sort of creed for each series, with sometimes heavy constraints. But you need constraints in order to create, otherwise things go in too many direction and it's not a series format. So I always make interesting findings throughout the research process. And that is the frustrating part, because "interesting" is not sufficient. But when I take the shot which contains all my criteria- artistic, emotional and technical- my heart skips a bit, literally! My heart literally hits my chest. It's physical, and I know it's the one! Consequently, the editing process is done live during the photo shoot.

Why are you so partial to black and white ?

I use black and white for two reasons. The first one is because I am rubbish with colours. The second one is because it matches my chiaroscuro-type of personality. Even my colour images – like Dust in particular and my next series as well – they are only disguised black and whites under a pale coloured veil. In the case of Klecksography, it was a prerequisite. The bodies had to appear as plaster statues. In colour, because of the different shades of skin, the viewer can easily identify each model, and that interferes with the reading of the picture.

I wanted a radical series, at odds with Dust. So I looked for something radically different. And I dived into it. I created Klecksography in pain, in the greatest darkness, almost in madness, and as a result the pictures are oppressive. They reflect several, very intense weeks of quasi-schizophrenia. I wasn't quite myself when I made this series. Or rather, I pushed myself to leave that which I was, for this series. It was a very beautiful human experience.

The Valsecchi characters seem to evolve in an oppressive environment, with a dramatic tension emphasised precisely by the use of black and white. Can you tell us more about that ?

It's the first time I hear the expression "the Valsecchi characters." It's very amusing, and true. It's me, indeed, incarnated by the models. I've always said my pictures were self-portraits, even if I am not present in them. They are me, so, consequently, they evolve in an oppressive universe, because I am.

In the end, your work has strong similarities to architecture. Are you more of a "creator" than a photographer?

I am a researcher. Of course, I take great pleasure as a photographer, taking simple photos, fashion shots or portraits. It's even necessary so as to break the infernal spiral of research. A photographic research is exactly like a scientific research: we conduct tests, go forward, we make mistakes, find leads, then change direction...

So a safety-valve is needed- being able to take photos without questioning everything. Because the problem with research is that you become greedy. You

make a first breakthrough, and invariably, you want more the next time. And so it goes until the last image of the series.

I want to create images that have not been seen over and over, otherwise what's the point ? What's the use? Personally, I find it boring. I respect photography, and beyond being a photographer, I simply love photography. I love looking at other people's work, I love being surprised. I love seeing works that are thoroughly accomplished and I salute the talent of some of those artists. I then try to bring my own original contribution. I do not want to show my work "just for show" and do not want to participate in the incontinence of images. I bring propositions when I feel that my pictures differ from the ordinary scope. This is why it takes time and it requires a lot of work, because it has all been done before, and nowadays it is difficult to astonish or to be astonished.

Is being a photographer being a voyeur ?

Isn't it being an exhibitionist, rather? We do talk about "exhibitions", don't we ? And as I said before, an exhibitionist needs voyeurs in order to exist. Otherwise it would be like streaking in the desert.

Any current projects ?

Many projects. I just presented my new series. It's a challenge because I'm revisiting the classic nude figure lying down, dear to the drawing artists and the painters. Once again, everything's been done before, particularly in this genre, so I had to avoid many pitfalls. But this is how I work: I throw traps on my own path and I try to see how I'm going to avoid them.





Hans Withoos



Hans Withoos' career spans more than twenty years, during which he combined his commissioned work with his own projects. After graduating from the Arts Academy, he started a firm with Jolanda Cats, specializing in fashion, photography and commercial video. Their clients range from large corporations to non-profit organizations. Although highly successful in his commercial and international fashion work, he also is prolific in his independent work, making many photography series over the years, mostly situated in romantic and highly recognizable sites and cities around the world.

Hans Withoos' photography is set in the world of abundance and artifice- the smell of decadence wafting towards the viewer. It is a world that is both familiar and different.

In Withoos' exaggerated scenes, the figures crowding the images become archetypes, and the viewer is overcome by a sense of alienation. The work is full of layered, staged images with idiosyncratic aesthetics. At times, the photographs evoke emotions related to suffering, sensuality and hidden oppressiveness; at other times, the images depict the complete opposite and are deliberately emotionless.

Hans is a true storyteller. Sometimes his story is already carefully crafted, but often times it grows as an organism. Most of the stories he tells have a romantic veneer to them, but underneath the façade lies a gritty theme. His images don't aim to show any particular critical perspective but, rather, they leave it up to the viewers to make their own interpretations.

















Shall I compare thee to a summer's day ?
Thou art more lovely and more temperate.
Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May,
And summer's lease hath all too short a date.
Sometime too hot the eye of heaven shines,
And often is his gold complexion dimmed;
And every fair from fair sometime declines,
By chance, or nature's changing course, untrimmed;
But thy eternal summer shall not fade,
Nor lose possession of that fair thou ow'st,
Nor shall death brag thou wand'rest in his shade,
When in eternal lines to Time thou grow'st.
So long as men can breathe, or eyes can see,
So long lives this, and this gives life to thee.

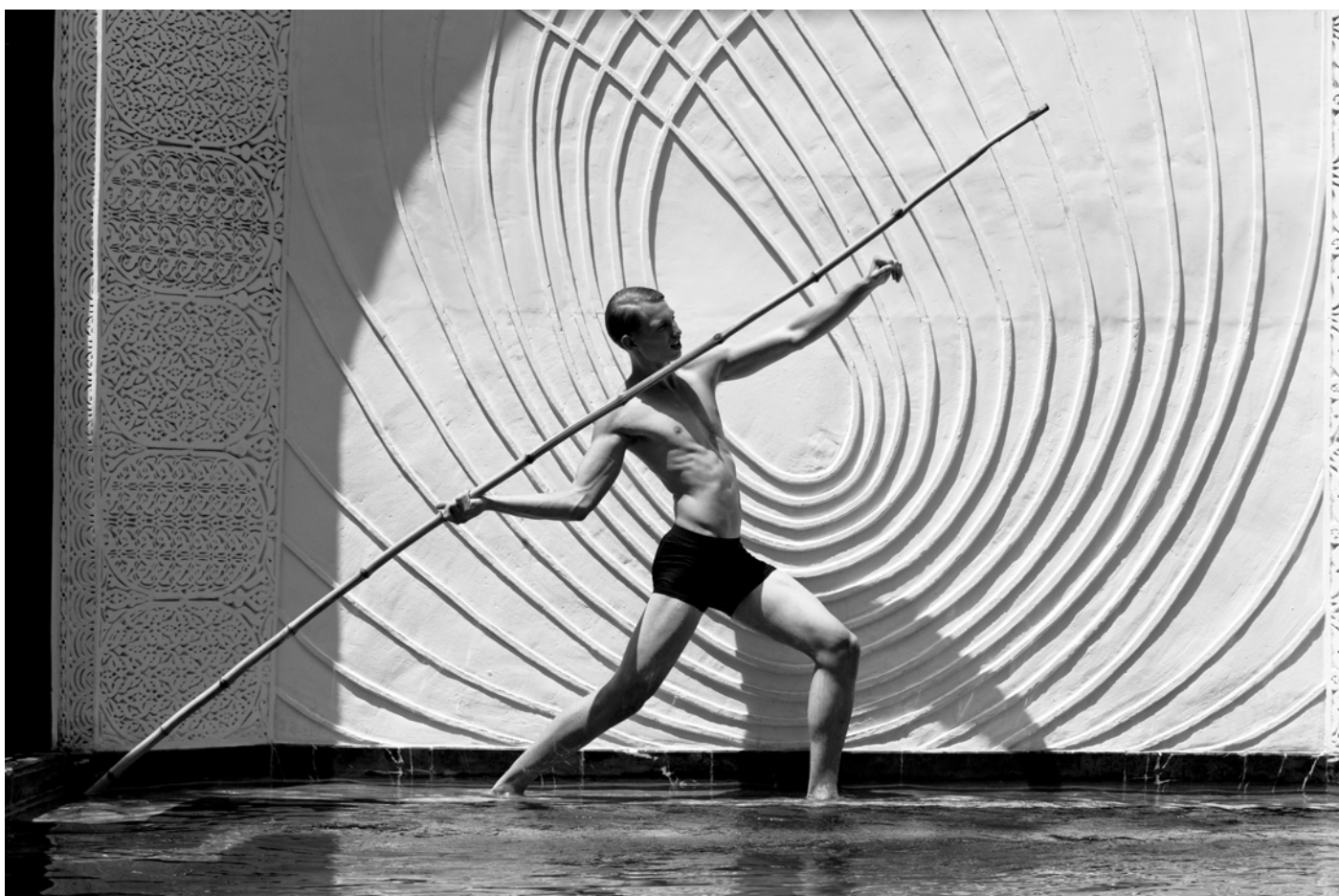
Sonnet XVIII

W. Shakespeare – (Part of the Fair Youth sequence, this sonnet is addressed to a young man)

Traduction Victor Hugo, 1857













Does your approach to fashion photography reflect your personal style?

The main answer is yes. The only difference is that with commissioned work, I have to listen to the wishes of a client and work with their particular products. But most of the time, I am invited to fashion shoots because people are familiar with my personal work and they like the idea of storytelling. Sometimes the clients like for me to organise the entire shooting. I make suggestions in the choice of models, themes, locations, and so on, but in the end, the client always has the last word.

There is an interesting story concerning the series “Lady with her Golden Toys”. Fernando Silva, a Brazilian fashion designer, asked me to do a shoot with the theme “The Golden Age”. He really wanted to have at least one frontal nude shot in this campaign so people would be shocked in Brazil. I told him the public might anticipate the male-female association. In my opinion, it directly refers to the couple, to family, which for me is all too familiar and boring, so I suggested creating a different story.

Central in this series is a young, beautiful and bored aristocratic young woman. Men are her toys to be played with and discarded when she gets tired of them. She is portrayed as “a double-edged sword”: she possesses innocence and cunning, passion and apathy, she is both attractive and repulsive. Most importantly, she is endowed with breath-taking beauty, having Medusa-like qualities: a beauty that petrifies. This is how the name “Lady with Her Golden Toys” came to be.

How do you choose your locations?

Sometimes I choose a location and sometimes the location chooses me.

I have a great memory for beautiful places: when I see one, I put it in a location-map on my computer. Sometimes when I travel, the location chooses me. I mean, that special place wants me to tell a story. So I do. On the other hand, if the fashion needs a special theme or location, I will go and find the right place. Every location can surprise me. They all deliver a lot of possibilities and I try to use the elements the locations give me. For the photo “Hotel de Nice”, the initial idea was to portray a vulnerable guy, miserable after a terrible date. But then I saw a Holy Cross on the wall, and immediately the man became a symbol for Jesus. I love to put a lot of hidden elements in pictures, so the location creates the image.

What is bad taste to you?

To me, bad taste has to do with arrogance, lack of interest or passion, resulting in a poorly-executed photo series or campaign. If you're referring to creativity, I don't believe in bad taste. There are so many different tastes and every taste creates something and tells a story. What is beautiful to one person might be ugly to the next person. It all truly lies in the eye of the beholder.

Aside from photography, do you have any passions?

My work is my love and my passion, my eyes, my head, and my body... It is something that fulfils all the needs in my life. My work makes me travel around the world. All my movements are related to my work. I love to discover the undetected, unseen things in life. Sometimes it just happens while I am working behind my computer, sometimes while exploring my backyard. On the other hand, it happens while I travel the world, meeting the most interesting people and places. I create my own world out of everything

I see and feel. Perception forges my reality.

What inspires you in men's body?

A man's body has so much to tell: it can be vulnerable, it can show power and strength, but also weakness and lust. It inspires me in all those aspects. I love all types of men's bodies. If I see a man's body, I will look for the sensual story that specific body has to tell. For me, it's not about muscles, athletes, and just physical beauty. I think men are all attractive in their own way. In my pictures, I try to show that: every man's body tells its own story.

How do you select your models?

When I have a new commission or start casting for my own projects, I decide what kind of model I need. I question what the new series needs in terms of body language, facial expression, and experience level. I select different options out of my own network, model agencies and/or social media. It all depends on the job I have to do and, of course, on my budget.

The more I work in fashion and art and the more my name gets recognised, the more models like to work with me. Models and agencies trust me in my quality and my respect. Once, a male model really wanted me to work with him. So, during a time span of two years, every Friday, I took photos of him in his underwear, which, to be honest, I did not mind at all. Finally, after two years, I had the idea of a special art project in which he fit perfectly.

Why is the use of colour important to you?

I love to use colours because it makes pictures more vibrant. The real world is in colour... but for me, colour is the expression of a better world, of the

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picture. Black and white refers to the past (filled with nostalgia). However, colour pictures more difficult to apprehend: what colour types I should use? How do the colours relate to one another? All are important ingredients to a good picture. That is why it is crucial to work with good stylists and designers. The same applies to makeup artists and hair stylists. Colour enriches the pictures and fits in with my glamorous way of thinking.

Do you have any funny anecdotes from a shoot ?

About two years ago, we went to Morocco with a group of models and Fernando Siva, the fashion designer for a shoot in the desert. Some years before, I had discovered a place called Ait Arbi Est, in the Des Dades Valley. It is a little village in which lie the ruins of several castles. It would have been beautiful for the setting we needed. Nowadays, only a few older women and children live there. So after shooting in the desert, on our way

back to Marrakesh, we stopped at Ait Arbi Est. It was difficult to bring our car but we managed. After much debate, we were allowed to shoot in these ruins. It was a beautiful but dangerous place because the ceilings were full of big holes. Climbing up, the locals (women and children) joined us to see this spectacle.

When the model had to change clothes, we of course paid attention to the habits of local people and we built a place so the model could change. People helped her into the dress. Suddenly the model started to run around the dangerous roof, naked, screaming, "Help, help... cockroach... cockroach..."

So, the locals tried to hide after seeing her naked. We tried to stop the model from running, possibly falling through a hole, and the stylist tried to save the dress from the cockroach that had accompanied us from the Sahara.

Another funny and sweet story:

I wanted to create a portrait to honour

my dad and stepmom. My stepmom was sick, in a very advanced stage of Parkinson's disease, and my dad was taking care of her. I wanted to create a picture with my dad naked, with his trousers around his ankles, and my stepmom like a Vivian Westwood in a beautiful and expensive haute-couture dress...

During the shoot, my stepmom needed to go to the bathroom, so the stylist helped her there. She couldn't make it and she wetted her expensive couture dress.

The picture turned out wonderful, but the story of the wetted dress made it more human...

What is the difference for you between male and female models ?

When I am shooting, I realise my male models all have various emotions but often related to sexuality. On the contrary, my female models can have



all sorts of different emotions, but they don't show sexuality at all.

In my work, you see male nudity quite often. Actually, last week I was in Paris shooting with an up-and-coming designer, Giuseppe Spoto, whom I met when working as his art director for a jewellery brand from New York. He will become a high fashion shoe designer. In these particular pictures, we worked with three naked female models and a bearded (werewolf) male.

Do you have any upcoming project that you would like to share with us ?

At the moment, I am working with some colleague artists on an art project for "Het 'Oog Ziekenhuis Rotterdam", a hospital specializing in ophthalmology celebrating their 140th anniversary. It involves twelve different explorations, all about "look, see and feel." I'm also working with Giuseppe Spoto on a project in an amazing location in

Argentina- a cemetery- for a jewellery shoot.

In a few months, I will work on a project with my partners, Jolanda Cats and Almamoun Benmira, in Zambia. That will be an independent art project for the organisation Orange babies. It will be a fashion-orientated art project.

“

**My work is my love and my passion,
my eyes, my head, and my body...
It is something that fulfils
all the needs in my life.**

















———— « Each image has its own story, and each photographer his story to tell. » ————



———— «They said, “it is shocking!” I said, “I can’t help it, these are my thoughts » ————

FRANÇOIS ROUSSEAU

REMINISCENCE ON 20 YEARS OF PHOTOGRAPHY



No need to introduce François Rousseau, the famous French photographer known for his famous Dieux du Stade calendars, displaying rugby players in their birthday suits. Still, that reference is rather limiting, because beyond his work in advertising, François is a versatile and prolix photographer. His personal and more artistic work is fascinating and spectacular, both in its execution and in the research it involves.

François Rousseau was born in Clermont-Ferrand and now lives in Paris. He studied arts and communication but suddenly stopped painting in 1994 in order to dedicate himself to photography. He has since juggled between portraits, fashion photography and more artistic projects. In the past few years, he has also been exploring video shoots and has even produced a few short pieces, including a behind-the-scene look on sports. He gets his inspiration from professional athletes and dancers, from their hard and defined bodies.

Looking at François's world is like stepping into a painter's studio: light is his palette, form and its many declinations, his personal ambition. François captures the intimacy, the strength and the intricacies of the body and its many shapes. Each of his projects is unique and particular, a reflection of his state of mind, of his desire to share an intimate vision, bare of any latent erotic tension. In his case, men are simply beautiful. Even if movements are sometimes exaggerated and the performance loud and staggering, the model's pose can also be pictorial, hypnotic, as if frozen in the silence of the studio.

ATELIER. 560

Kodak 160NC-2 3091
Kodak 160NC-2 3091
Kodak 160NC-2 3091
Kodak 160NC-2 3091
Kodak 160NC-2 3091











How did you end up being a photographer ?

Between the ages of 16 and 26, I did painting exclusively, until photography literally freed me. Painting means being locked up in a studio, isolated from the world, while taking pictures implies travelling, meeting people, opening yourself up to them. And that is exactly what I wanted to do in Atelier. By the way, that project is not photography per se. It is more— quite pompously— visual art. When I moved to Paris, I worked in a rather well-known art gallery called Jean Briance. It lasted for three years. Many painters used to show their work there, and I used to go to their studios to select their paintings and I would also take their picture. That is when I had an epiphany. That is when I started taking photos, even if I was unfamiliar with cameras.

Why did you choose to do nude pictures ?

Nudity is fundamentally connected to desire, and when desire takes over, there is no more room for thoughts. In some of my projects, I've decided to put desire aside, and that is when I did my best work. When desire was obvious, when it was controlling me, my pictures weren't as strong.

Working on the nude was for me a way to underline physical power. I am fascinated by power, yet I take pleasure in showing vulnerability. Many women enjoy my pictures because they show some sort of sensitivity. In some of my pictures, the models are gentle, almost fragile. So, in a nutshell, I like the power of the body.

What is your creative process for taking pictures ?

I never look for the same things. In Atelier, I wanted to go back 20 years to finish what I never got the chance to complete doing paintings. The abrupt change of direction I experienced in 1993, when I put down the brush, was really hard. One day, I completed a painting and I haven't touched paint ever since! That shift was traumatic, even violent. For about 15, 20 years, that experience weighed me down, and that is why I decided to do Atelier. I had to come to terms with that event and that is why I recreated a painter's universe, with the desire to feel the emotion of a model posing for a painter, not a photographer. Then I worked on Habibi and discovered New York City: a whole new environment, a whole new approach to sexuality and a world of tolerance. I had tried to bring together

young inner-city guys, dancers and gay Parisians, but they couldn't work together. I even heard some really nasty remarks 10 years ago. Whereas when I met Habibi, he was training in Mike Tyson's gym. He was an inner-city guy who had worked for Pieter & Roger, and the meeting of those two different worlds— the Manhattanite openly-gay crowd and the working-class Brooklyn universe— happened very naturally. That is what I was looking for. It was all new and exciting. I initially went to New York City to work in advertising, yet I could only focus on Atelier, which was a rather ambitious project— three years of work, 100 pieces— that ended up being shown at the Maison Européenne de la Photographie (MEP). I did all my work in a huge theatre— Annie Leibowitz's former studios— in the States, with years of hard work, weeks in Los Angeles, going back and forth between Paris and the States.

Et Photoshop dans tout ça ?

Photography is about capturing life, while the painter's model is static: he comes in to disrobe and pose in a specific place. That was the case for painters like Lucien Freud and Francis Bacon, to name a few. In painting, the nude is connected to the studio, even if



some nudes were painted outside. And in the end, it's exactly like photomontage, just like Photoshop today. When Flandrin painted his "Jeune homme nu assis au bord de la mer", he did all his work in his studio, adding in the landscape later. So it was a special effect of sorts. His painting was based on that. Nowadays, we hear a lot of complaints about Photoshop contributing to "a world of fakeness." But painting was Photoshop's precursor! Artists have always tried to embellish reality. When Napoleon posed on his horse for David, he asked to be retouched. Anything goes in photography, from raw, realistic shots to fine-tuned images. So that whole rant about Photoshop is utterly ridiculous!

I do a lot of retouching; I did so even when I used to work on film. But I'd rather qualify that as "compositing." Atelier is so polished that it can be compared to a painting. I mix pictures together, like in my fresco. It took me a year to complete it, since there are 20 different photos in it, with a right side, a left side, the various shadings-- it's a long process of re-arranging elements together. I must admit I sometimes felt it was too much. I wanted to paint, and I ended up painting with Photoshop! Photoshop offers wonderful opportu-

nities for composing; mixing different proportions, but, unfortunately, it can lead to disaster when it is poorly used. Skin can look like plastic, and that's a real problem.

Des passions ?!

Making videos is an expansion of my work. I think it will take over my photographic work in the years to come. I think I'll end up making films. Music is also a passion of mine that will probably be combined with film-making and photography. I can say I'm a repressed musician, since I would have loved to be a composer!

What if you hadn't become a photographer or a painter?

I would have been a biologist, to study life and nature.

Tell us about your experience with Les Dieux du stade.

Emmanuel d'Orazio initially contacted me. He organises a lot of parties in Paris, like his Club Sandwich. He worked as a booker at Next Agency at the time and he did his job well. That was in 2003. Max Cuazzini, who was president of Stade Français at the time, was looking for some photo-

graphers and Emmanuel suggested he looked at my portfolio. That is when it all started for me. After the first calendar in 2004, we'd always say we'd do another one. One day we ran into each other and decided to go for it-- which we did in 2010, 2011 and 2012. Initially, we wanted to follow the 50-year-old trend of shooting athletes in the locker-room, relaxing after a game. The idea was to imagine being a fly on the wall, to show what's going on when nobody's around, in the shower for instance. We wanted reality. The other calendars were more staged: we'd put them in baths, or in very different situations. What I wanted to do was show them in dignified postures, to show their power, their sexiness, their might. That was wonderful experience! It's the most difficult task I've ever done. It was physically taxing. The shoot spread over a two-week period, during which we'd get 40 pages worth of material. We had to work hard with guys who weren't professionals. We had to work at it-- with models; the photo is done in two minutes. So it took us hours to find the perfect shot each time. Sometimes we went too far, having them pose like pin-up models. It was ridiculous having such beautiful men reduced to that!

...





...

Which body part do you like photographing the most ?

Hands! Whether they belong to actors, dancers, artists or athletes. What matters to me is the human side of it all. And you can really get the whole person by just focusing on their hands.

Et dans quoi veux-tu t'investir maintenant ?

Photos et videos de mode, clip, court métrage, portraits... Mais surtout beaucoup de clips autour de la danse, je souhaiterais travailler dessus, appréhender la danse. Je souhaite également traiter la violence, très liée à la virilité, liée au masculin et je vais m'interroger, tout en continuant à travailler sur le nu, même si je fais beaucoup de mode et que maintenant ça me fascine, ce qui n'était pas trop le cas avant. Tout comme David Bailey qui déclarait que la mode l'ennuyait à ses débuts et qu'il ne faisait ça que pour photographier de belles nanas, j'ai le sentiment de faire de même, sans vouloir me comparer à lui et sembler prétentieux !

What do you want to focus on right now ?

On fashion photography and video, on short films, portraits, but particularly on videos focusing on dance. I'd really love to get a good grasp on the art of dance.

I'd also like to address the issue of violence, which is linked to virility, to masculinity. I want to ask myself those questions, while still working on nude and fashion photography, which I'm doing a lot right now. I am fascinated by those issues, which I didn't use to be. David Bailey used to say that fashion photography bored him at first, that he was only doing it in order to look at beautiful chicks. In all humility, I feel the same way !

Is the choice of model a collaboration between you and the brand ?

Absolutely. I couldn't work with someone I don't like. I always request a meeting with the models so that we can share ideas, because it is hard working with people I've never met before.

Who would you love to have as a model ?

After working with models like Ryan Gosling and Zidane, I have the growing desire to work with women, actresses like Scarlet or Kate Winslet, who's one of my favourite, especially in Revolutionary Road, which is a beautiful look at relationships and breakups. If I were to pick an actor, it would be Daniel D. Lewis. He's the greatest!

“

**I am fascinated by power,
yet I take pleasure in showing
vulnerability.**

”





IMPOSE YOUR LUCK,
EMBRACE HAPPINESS
AND GO TOWARD
RISK. AS THEY SEE
YOU DOING SO,
THEY'LL GET USED TO IT.

René Char
(1907-1988)









all by Maison Martin Margiela



















Find François Rousseau's exclusive editorial page 144

PARTIE II

*To be filled with admiration for
that man's nude body all over again*

DDIARTE

THE GREAT MASTERS OF BAROQUE DIGITAL ART



DDiarte's compositions of flesh and muscles can be compared to Bosch's or Michelangelo's religious works: opulent human forms in orgiastic shambles, a intangible mess. DDiarte epitomise the absolute art of photographic composition, manipulating geometric forms and the body, playing with space and volumes. Their meticulous technique can be spotted everywhere and manipulation is their motto. Their stories are recreated and materialised at their will, as if by a strange aesthetic law, a hedonistic quest for perfection, with the only desire to annihilate indifference by provoking the most apathetic minds. As if art were born out of the combination of feelings, willpower, creativity and imagination. The profundity of their work is the stage for both truly human stories and altered mythologies— an ode to nature, the criticism of consumer society, love, vice and virtue. Their models are their specimens, some sort of personal and unique prototypes that contribute to the creation of their ideal body type, inspired by painting. Diamantino Jesus and Zé Diogo, commonly

called DDiarte, their stage name, were both born in Madeira, a Portuguese archipelago where they now live as a couple. They showed great interest for art early on, excelling in painting and sketching, as well as science and technology. Their talent is now notorious and has gone beyond frontiers.

Together since 1999, the two artists have created DDiarte, which was initially dedicated to painting, with the goal of organizing shows— both personal and collective— and of painting frescos in churches. In 2003, they got interested in photography and in digital retouching. Without any formal training, they've created absolute works of art which won them international awards or were bought by collectors or museums. The human body is DDiarte's focus, the two creators sometimes ending up both behind and in front of the camera. The seductive manipulation of colours and of organisms tell sarcastic, caustic and satirical stories that lead our imagination towards a mythological world, a subversion of reality.



















What would you say is your contribution to photography?

Within the context of art's historiography, the use of photography and more specifically of retouching photographs, is nothing new. We do however aim to somewhat innovate, in terms of the themes on which our work is based. Regardless of the fact that our main source of inspiration is mythology, up-to-date themes or others that are the simple fruit of our creativity, still remain full of details, of symbols, of images, and make an attempt to captivate, but mainly to stimulate critical thought in our viewers.

While some of our work can be seen as satirical in a globalized world, yet still full of differences, other examples can be seen as purely scenic, only to be contemplated at will. If some of our pictures shout out against discrimination, at the same time they pay indelible homage to beauty.

How does your partnership work, and how did it start?

It happened some years before we started doing photography; we had an atelier of painting, which is our studio today.

Our partnership is very simple: we do everything together, there is no specific tasks assigned, we both take the photos

depending on the disposition, we both work on the post-production, and of course we always exchange ideas about what we are doing!

How do your images come to life?

It depends on the type of photography we're doing. When talking about those images with many models, including nudes, they can take months, sometimes years to finish! First comes the idea or the message we want to transmit, then we do the brainstorming: everything goes on a piece of paper, we sketch some drawings, do research about mythology in history books, look at classical paintings, the internet, etc. Then we see how many models we need and the position they must have for the photo-shoot.

We choose them and contact them. We explain everything we need and we do the photo-shoot for each model separately, because they don't like to do nudes with other models at the same time. This means we must be very careful with light direction in every shooting, because the final result must give impression that they are all together! But during all this process, new ideas arise and the initial project can grow till we think it's enough. After all this, we start the post-production process with

Photoshop; this takes a really long time because everything must be perfect: light, shadows, colours etc. We love putting in small details because they tell so much in our images!

What is your vision of nude in your photography, and how do you use it?

We use it in a very natural way, always being very careful not to make it look like porn! The nude is an excellent way to transmit anything because people pay attention to it, whether it be because of the bodies' beauty or because they are shocked by it, people always look upon it with love or hate, never with indifference.

For you, what is the difference between male and female models (as photographers, and as men)?

As photographers, male models are more difficult to shoot than women. Women give more options with poses; their lines are softer and more elegant. With men, we have to be very careful not to use any feminine poses, unless we want to. As men, we think the human body is a work of art; that says it all!

According to you, what is the worst thing in photography?



There are many... but I can think of one which does happen very often. It is when someone without any talent for photography buys a camera and thinks he is already a professional photographer and «steals» work from the real ones. Because they ask for very low prices, the results are catastrophic but friends and clients don't have the courage to speak out, so they say that it's a wonderful work !

Could you explain why you make so many references to mythology, tales and religion ?

Well, since we painted before starting photography, the themes in our paintings were inspired by the classics, mythology, religion and the profane. When we started this photographic adventure 11 years ago, we continued to be inspired by the same themes, we think they are always present in our lives and through them we can send messages and criticise society in many areas like the environment, politics, violence, racism, etc. Of course, people can better understand what we mean if they have even a minimal knowledge about the references we use.

Any others passions, aside from photography ?

We still love painting, but unfortunately

we have no more time for it. We're starting to do video and make music!

Any regrets in photography?

We've never had an image published that was a failure... but we have two images that we never finished because we forgot that we live on a small island and we couldn't find all the stuff we needed to do it!

Which emotion expresses a DDiArte model ?

In most of our work, we do not want to focus on beauty and harmony only. We want to tell a story, to transmit something, we want to reach people, we want people to feel something good or bad about what they are watching. This is not easy for us because our models are not professionals, they are mainly our own friends or people we invite, and we must tell them everything they must do with their body or face, and sometimes it is really hard to get where we want to be.

What is your criteria of beauty ?

I think they are most common, the same as everyone else: a balanced body shape with toned muscles and of course a nice face. In each picture, we chose the beauty that suits best, sometimes a big or even fat body is the perfect aesthetic!

But this kind of model is very difficult to find here, because they usually refuse to get naked for a photo.

In fact, you are more painters than photographers ?

Maybe you are right, we've been painters since we were little boys-- this gift was born with us-- and photography came after we were over 30 years old. Very often we use Photoshop as if it were a brush.

What epitaph you would like to see engraved on your tombstone ?

DDiArte: Masters of digital baroque !

Do you have any upcoming project that you would like to share with us ?

Right now, we have to finish more than twenty projects, we started some of them three or four years ago, because we have other jobs aside photography, and because they are very complex projects.

But this week we just finished our largest image, 180m². It is for the ceiling of a palace in Lisbon that will be a luxury restaurant. The theme is the French Revolution in Paris and it has 110 characters. We think it is unique, we are not aware of a photo as big as ours used on a ceiling before.





« THE SHAME IS NOT IN MAN'S NAKEDNESS, IT IS IN



THE FACT THAT HE TRIES TO FORGET IT. » *Jean Brun*







Fragil Vidros

Diário de Arte











The photograph opposite is DDiArte's latest project, a giant fresco of some 180 m, to be inaugurated at the end of October at the Small Palace in Lisbon, a former luxury hotel transformed into a restaurant and nightclub in the centre of the Portuguese capital. The project took four months of intense work, including many nights. The fresco has been printed in three parts on a very sturdy canvas. This isn't the duo's first giant installation; they have already created giant works for entire walls in luxurious hotels or night clubs. The gigantic ceiling project was

born from Portuguese architect Giano Gonçalves, in charge of the building's renovation. His commission was for a 180 m photograph covering the ceiling of the palace's main reception room. The hotel being of French style, the image had to be referencing Paris, the French Revolution and Marie-Antoinette. Finished only last August, the fresco has 110 characters. "We think it is unique, we are not aware of a photo as big as ours used on a ceiling before," the artists said. (see more details below – pictures: iPhone)





AURELIO MONGE

BACK TO ANTIQUITY

Aurelio Monge is a Spanish photographer born in Jaen, Andalusia, in 1971. He now lives in Miravet, Tarragona, on the country's Mediterranean North-East coast. His first contact with photography happened when he was 18 years old, but it was only in 2009, after suffering a near-death experience, that he felt a special motivation for photography as a personal art, exploring new ways and more intimate horizons with his own perspective and sensibility.

His work focuses on the human figure, especially the male body, not only as a study of it, but as the ultimate representation of the nude classic beauty, whether Apollonian or Dionysian, from the corporeal to the essential. His vision of the nude is always linked to a sense of beauty, as a necessity of his sensitive reality, and only reachable through harmonious balance and proportion.

For him, the art-expression of nudity transcends the merely erotic genre in order to explore the form's domain and the light's strength. He dedicates quite a lot of time exploring the wonderful expressive possibilities of the human male nude body, using the chiaroscuro technique in creations such as series of academic studies which are pregnant with the Western artistic tradition reminiscing of baroque paintings.







NUDITY AND NAKEDNESS A CONSTANT STATE FOR THE ANTIQUE MALE

— Par Paul Luro —

General culture and everyday life in antique Greece focussed on the male individual. Men and boys had a privileged status in comparison to women and girls. The legitimate and proper schooling of young men was a major concern, particularly for the betterment of society. The overruling objective of the Greek's educational system, called *La Paideia*, was to reach masculine perfection, by working on the (male) body, the mind and the spirit. Love and erotic relationships between men and youngsters were perceived as a most efficient way to promote this ideal. The instruction of young men

was conducted in the *Gymnasium*, a place made of several buildings, located in the centre of every Greek vibrant city district. There, men and "ephebes" (eighteen to twenty-five year old men) would spend many hours wrestling with exercises both physical and intellectual. Philosophers, poets and artists of all ages met in this exclusively male environment to discuss, debate and debate the moral and philosophical virtues of the male condition. The *Gymnasium* became "the epicentre of erotic energies". Bronze statues of athletes, heroes, warriors or gods – most of them nude – were erected within the different buildings of the *Gymnasium's* complex. The daily contemplation of such figures was to entice the young viewer to emulate such perfection.

Nudity had within itself a metaphysical signification, because external physical perfection was a reflection of interior moral and spiritual perfection.



The best example of such representation may be Polykleitos' *Doryphore* (the lance carrier), first example of Greece's veneration of the male nude body. (The *Doryphore*, that artists name *Canon* "because, as in Law, they look for the founding principles of their art, and that only among men is it considered to have created Art itself within the artwork" Pliny the Elder (Gaius Plinius Secundus, 23-79 AD *Naturalis Historia Encyclopaedia*). The *Doryphore* represents an *ephebe*: brave, strong, without hair and agile. With this statue, male beauty is elevated to a status close to the divine, because the Greeks saw in the male nude figure a sign of perfection – hence the many ancient wrestling and battle scenes portraying completely naked men.

As it was with Greek society, Greek mythology was extremely anthropocentric and focused on men. Even if the mythology concentrates on heroic acts, it also deals with the sexuality of men and gods. Greek gods were the personification of nature, usually engaged in heterosexual and sometimes homosexual relationships—whether intergenerational or bestial in nature. The story between Zeus and Ganymede is maybe the most famous scene of physical attraction to the male body, found on many ancient vases, mosaics or represented in statues. The *Iliad* tells of Ganymede's reputation to be the most beautiful of mortals. Zeus, seeing him nude, turned himself into an eagle to take the young man to Mount Olympus and possess him.



THE VITRUVIAN MAN

The measurements of man are in nature distributed in this manner, that is:

A palm is four fingers, a foot is four palms, a cubit is six palms, four cubits make a man, a pace is four cubits, a man is 24 palms, and these measurements are in his buildings.

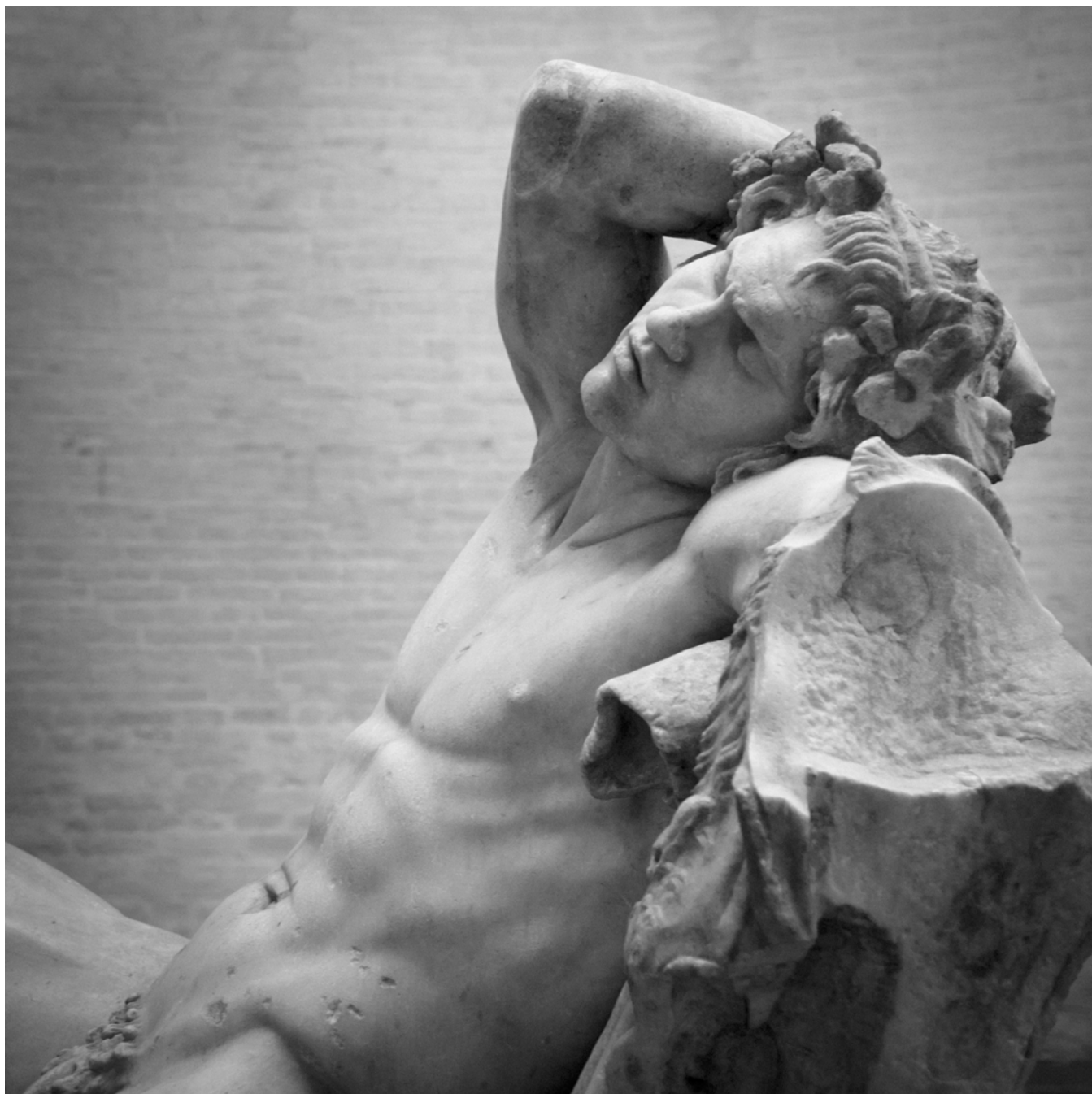
If you open your legs enough that your head is lowered by one-fourteenth of your height and raise your hands enough that your extended fingers touch the line of the top of your head, know that the centre of the extended limbs will be your navel, and the space between your legs will be an equilateral triangle.

The length of the outstretched arms is equal to the height of a man. From the hairline to the bottom of the chin is one-tenth of the height of a man. From below the chin to the top of the head is one-eighth of the height of a man. From above the chest to the top of the head is one-sixth of the height of a man. From above the chest to the hairline is one-seventh of the height of a man. The maximum width of the shoulders is a quarter of the height of a man. From the breasts to the top of the head is a quarter of the height of a man. The distance from the elbow to the tip of the hand is a quarter of the height of a man. The distance from the elbow to the armpit is one-eighth of the height of a man. The length of the hand is one-tenth of the height of a man. The root of the penis is at half the height of a man. The foot is one-seventh of the height of a man. From below the foot to below the knee is a quarter of the height of a man. From below the knee to the root of the penis is a quarter of the height of a man. The distances from below the chin to the nose and the eyebrows and the hairline are equal to the ears and to one-third of the face.



Vitruvian Man
Leonardo da Vinci

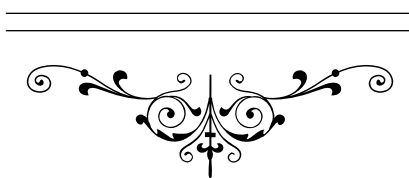








SIMON LOHMEYER



Simon Lohmeyer is a 24 year-young photographer and model, born in Munich, Germany. He portrays himself as a young contemporary hippy-- halfway between a stoned German hipster and an American rebel, hungry for freedom. Quirky and raw, ethereal and direct. A singularly trashy fashion photographer, Simon has a passion for travels, particularly to Mexico, or taking photographs of his friends: naked in Cambodian temples, on roads, in disgusting toilets or on beaches in remote countries. Sometimes, though, he will create some very stylised compositions, and elaborate luxurious scenes for a fashion editorial. A kind of prototype not quite definable yet, but well worth keeping an eye on. As for now, he does what he pleases, with his will as the only rule. —————





What is your style ?

It's not my style – it's my life

What is a good image for you ?

I like a picture when I can feel the complete freedom of that moment, taken in 125th of a second.

What do you still do secretly ?

Keeping secrets is my only secret.

How does a work meeting or a shooting with Simon go ? With alcohol and drugs ?

It does happen, yes !

Is being a photographer being a voyeur ?

A voyeur is acting in secret – I am not.

Your favourite hobby ?

Is masturbation a hobby ? Otherwise I would say to be high, riding my motorbike.

What is good taste for Simon ?

Having good taste is being completely honest with yourself.

“
A photo
is painted
with light,
I like the sun
to be my brush.
”

What is your vision of the nude in photography ?

Nudity is a funny word. It describes a human without clothing, not hiding behind fashion and façade. My vision is to capture that: the real spirit of the individual in real time, but with a little twist.

Could you explain to us why do you prefer to shoot outdoors ?

A photo is painted with light – I like the sun to be my brush.

A personal motto ?

We don't sweat - we sparkle !

Do you have any upcoming project that you would like to share with us ?

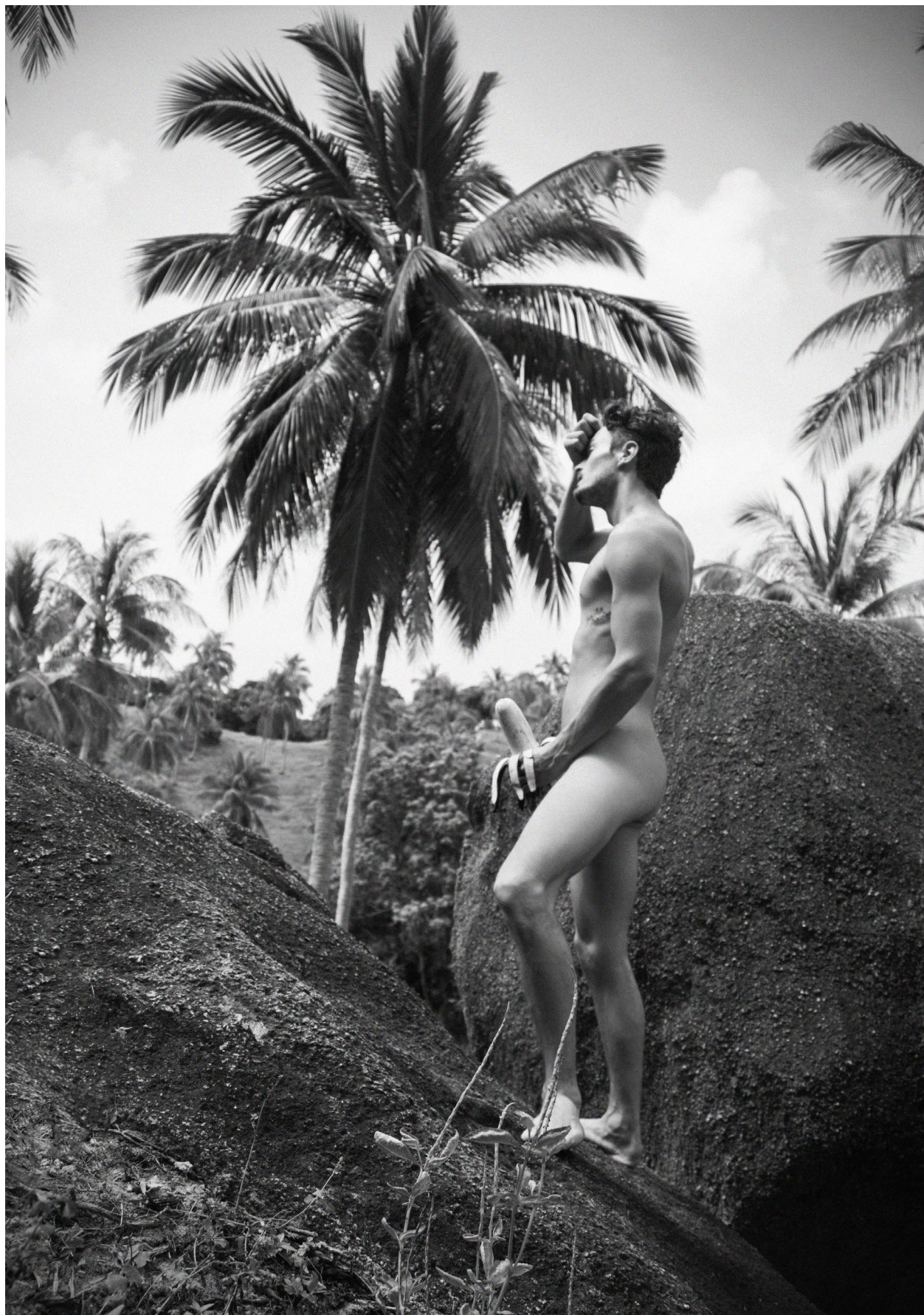
A children book about fruits and how they grow !











CONNIE IMBODEN



THE ART OF ROMANTIC OBSCURANTISM

Connie Imboden's middle name is ambiguity. Beyond the eccentric sixty year-old with natural white hair proud to show pictures of her parachuting, her work remains enigmatic and obscure. Born in 1953, Connie is an American photographer who lives and works in Baltimore as an arts professor at the university of Notre Dame. She's organized workshops in New York, at the Rencontres d'Arles, in the Czech Republic or in the Emirates.

Connie's work is represented in many arts collections, including the MoMa, in New York, or the BNF, in Paris, as well as in public and private collections throughout Europe, America and more recently, China. In 1992, she was considered the greatest discovery in Paris.

Some of her works represents naked bodies, or body parts, immersed in water, in a black pool covered with mirrors reflecting light, twisting and reshaping the body in surreal distortions, offering a new point of view on its original

shape. She finds inspiration in the chemistry between water and light, in the reflexion of the submerged naked body. Her pictures are shocking, surprising and sometimes off-putting. They act as poetic metaphors on the body and the face, an interesting look at the human condition. They convey a tragic and romantic sense of calm, an ostentatious and respectful tranquillity. Your vision seems blurry, making it impossible to know for sure what it is you are contemplating. Her pictures come to life once you let your mind go, once your eyes take over, guided by the poetry of her world. The viewer gets surprised by the visual beauty and sincerity of the picture and by the odd and complex distortion of the mind. Even though there are many possible ways to interpret her work, Imboden's work remain metaphorical and poetic.

The sky above the models' heads is as dark as the pool below them and that blackness echoes with the psychological depth and the abstrusity of her work.







“

Nudity is the most popular subject in art history, and now I know why. Thanks to nudity, we can explore our psychology, our spirituality and our appearance

”

Connie Imboden





Série
NORMAL

— par —
François Rousseau

BLACKNESS

Juliette Gernez, Danser at the Opéra de Paris,
André Atangana (*Model*)
Chih-Yuan Liang (*Stylist*)
Axelle Dersin (*Make-up & Hair*)
Amandine Laurent (*Assistant Photo*)



Coat Maison Martin Margiela



Dress Alexandre Vauthier





Coat & leather trousers **Maison Martin Margiela**



Dress Maison Martin Margiela



Coat Maison Martin Margiela



Trousers Dice Kayek

History and representation of the penis

In almost all civilisations and cultures throughout the world, whether antique or modern, phallic symbols have been part of people's lives. And even though the representation and symbolics of the phallus have varied throughout history, what it stands for has remained constant: sex, power, fertility and masculinity. In the Western artistic tradition, the representation of the genitals has always been part of the aesthetics of the nude. There is no art without the representation of the male attribute.

FOREWORD: THE ORIGINS OF THE MASCULINE IDEAL

The representation and display of erotic images were part of life in the Roman Empire. Pornographic (from the Greek: "pórnh", meaning prostitute, and "gráphō", meaning paint) images, whether they be represented in ceramics, paintings or statues, were part of the public realm and visible by all, with no taboo attached to them. They could be seen in brothels as well as in religious temples. The function of that type of art (because, yes, it is art) was to educate the population about what was acceptable or not, and to make them laugh at grotesque imagery.

The depiction of the male appendage wasn't as restrained as it is now in most countries; with less restrictions and denial towards the deep-rooted sexual facet of human nature. Ancient Greek ceramics are the oldest representation we have today of male sexually-explicit illustrations. The Greek male canon was a small aesthetic penis, which the Romans will later perpetuate.

There was a modern shift of aesthetics and perspective. Not only was the penis presented "at ease" because the erection was considered as favouring instincts over reason (which is in opposition to ancient Greek teachings) but it had to be preferably "small" and aesthetic. The young, the Kouros or the adult male, when nude are all portrayed with a small member, which the Greek culture sees as the reflection of civilised and moderate moral qualities. On the other hand, a large, long or thick penis is the attribute of a licen-

tious or depraved man, hence unworthy of civic values. According to Aristotle himself, a penis that is too long is a sign of sterility.

MISCHIEF AND FRESCOES OF POMPEII



On the 24th of August 79 AD, Pompeii, a flourishing city south of Naples' bay is suddenly fixed in eternity beneath Mount Vesuvius' aches. Buried for centuries, hidden from anyone's gaze, the city has been re-revealed to the world in the 20th century. Amongst historical and architectural treasures, archaeologists have discovered many bright-coloured frescoes in almost pristine condition.

Antonio Varone, on-site Director of Excavations revealed that "disproportionate phallus, sometimes winged or zoomorphic were everywhere along the streets, on the floor, walls, outside

shops, or carved in low relief". He adds, «There can be no shame in representing a phallus, it is by no means an obscene picture, to hide, not even from the sight of children. If it is reproduced on a disproportionate scale, it is to use his magical power. «

But this fresco art was hidden for years. After being excavated, it was installed in secret rooms of several prestigious museums in a "Cabinet of Obscene Objects" more coyly called the 'Reserved Cabinet' from 1823. One of the first pieces found when the vestiges were being excavated was a marble statue of "Pan copulating with Goat", a very explicit depiction of zoophilia considered so obscene that it remained hidden from the general public for years. This secret room has been closed and re-opened several times over the years and, to this day, this statue remains at the Naples National Archaeological Museum (the former Museo Borbonico) where, since 2005 it has been kept in a separate room amongst a collection of similar artefacts. It is interesting to note that women visitors were not allowed to see these objects until the second half of the 20th century.

In both Pompeii and Herculaneum, many erotic symbols could be found on cobblestones, on walls, in frescoes or statues in a very realistic style showing sodomy, fellatio, threesomes, male prostitution, lesbian couples, zoophilia... but the most common symbol found was the phallus, which was used as protection against the evil eye and as a lucky charm. Sometimes the phallus was ridden by a god (as it were a horse),

or used as a fountain (not unlike a full-sized Manneken Pis). On the main plaza or in the forum, if you paid attention to certain stones on the walls, you could find phallic symbols positioned to indicate to locations of the many brothels that could be found in this most vibrant part of the city.

Pompeii's civilisation and its approach to sexuality remains true to ancient Greece's quest for virtue and beauty coupled with an exacerbated attraction toward sensuality and hedonism leading to the cult of Dionysus and the cult for the phallus, associated with Hermes the God of fertility and good fortune.

ANCESTRAL AND SACRED PHALLUS GRAFFITIS



In the antiquity's continuity, frescoes of giant penises were forever present in Bhutan's culture. Whether pictured with two or three testicles, hairy or not, straight or curved, sometimes accompanied by mystical animals, always erect, always ejaculating, the male attribute is sacred and the purpose of its depiction is to fend off the evil spirits. Though part of genuine tradition, and often elaborate and aesthetical as they may be, these frescoes may be shocking.

The protective role of the phallus is usually attributed to Drukpa Kunley (1455 – 1529), a sort of eccentric Tibetan monk who brought Buddhism to Bhutan in the middle of the 15th century. Widely referred to as the “divine fool”, Drukpa Kunley was a tantric yogi. According to local legend, he turned a demoness into a protective deity by hitting her with his penis. Because of this power to subdue demons, Kunley's

penis is referred to as the «Thunderbolt of Flaming Wisdom» and he himself is known as the «fertility saint.» For this reason women from all around the world visited his monastery to seek his blessing.

As a sign of protection, he left a legacy of painted phalluses that can still be found on people's home walls. Drukpa Kunley's influence isn't just a myth: inhabitants of western Bhutan still believe in these wall paintings – real works of art considered as an ancestral practice. When a new house is built or renovated, some people will hire artists and professional painters to create or restore such paintings.

As the inhabitants say, it isn't done out of provocation but rather to enhance the prosperity and fertility within the household. The colour red is used as a symbol of desire turned into wisdom. It is Drukpa Kunley's colour which, associated with the colour white, is found to be very amusing!

KANAMARA MATSURI, JAPAN'S PENIS FESTIVAL

Literally meaning “the celebration of the steel phallus” is an annual Shinto festival, its main festivities fall on the first Sunday in April. The penis, as the central theme of the event, is depicted in illustrations, candy, carved vegetables and many decorations.

According to seventeenth century Edo legends, a sharp-toothed demon fell hopelessly in love with a young and beautiful virgin girl. But she refused the demons courting and married another man. This infuriated the demon who hid inside the vagina of the young woman and bit off the young man's penis on their wedding night. As a result, the young woman sought help from a blacksmith, who fashioned an iron phallus to break the Vagina Dentata demon's teeth, and prompted the beast to flee its hiding place for good. This led to the enshrinement of the item and the wide spreading of the legend

until a place of worship was established in Kanayama, to honour Kanayama Hikokami and Kanayama Himenokami, respectively Shinto gods of childbirth and of the healing of the lower abdomen. The shrine became particularly popular among prostitutes, who wished to worship them as fertility gods, protector from sexually-transmitted diseases. It is also said the shrine offers divine protection for business prosperity, and for the clan's prosperity, as well as for marital harmony.

Today, the festival has become something of a tourist attraction where three portable shrines, or mikoshi, are donated to the Wakamiya Hachiman-gu temple to transport three different penises. First, there is the traditional mikoshi, called the Kanamara Mikoshi to transport the wooden phallus. Then there is the boat-shaped Kanamara-bune Mikoshi used for the most ancient black iron penis. The third is called the Elizabeth Mikoshi, which is easily recognizable due to its bright pink color and also because it is carried by transgender Japanese citizens. Today this festival is also the opportunity to raise awareness on sexual practices and is used to raise money for HIV research.



By Paul Luro

Flash on

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SHAFFER

Confession

I started this project called Lightrapping several years ago (cf : www.lightrapping.com). Around that time, I had taken the habit of going out with a friend, looking for out-of-the-ordinary urban site locations to shoot. About ten years ago, at the start of the great Brazilian economic boom, many abandoned neighbourhoods could still be found around the area where I lived. There was a great feeling of graffiti revival sensations during our outings inasmuch as we felt as if we were the recipients of a former concept whilst giving new and very private meaning to these areas of our city as we left traces of our presence in its walls.

The feeling of freedom and power associated with our being in these neighbourhoods, even for fleeting moments, brought about some more daring actions, leading (amongst other things) to nudity. The next step consisted of trying to portray something new and original by creating something beautiful. I started by bringing small LED pocket torches to interfere with the varying light on site. These LED torches are the only lighting equipment I use. During that time, I started listing all of my friends' sexual fantasies and quirks, and we went out to materialise these ideas as close to fantasy as possible. After a while and a large number of shootings, I decided to post some of these photos on a website. The feedback was very good, which motivated me to keep up with a regular pace of creating these images. Since I didn't have any training in photography, my spare time was all I had. I'm a jurist by trade therefore my spare time was very precious for these excursions. At the beginning, the idea was to use the webpage as a record of these expeditions. As time went by, I actively looked for people to shoot, models. I modified and created profiles on dating sites, indicating my intentions, but the result ratio was somewhat disappointing. With the development of dating applications such as Grindr, Scruff and Hornet, a new opportunity arose. I decided to twist the purpose of these applications by applying the same methods I'd used for the listing of my friends' fantasies a few years before. The basic idea was subversive. Whereas the principal aim of these sites is for people to engage in superficial chit-chats leading to meaningless one-night stands, my goal was to convince strangers to open-up to me and share intimate aspects of their lives, particularly sexually orientated ones. I would then use the information to create images depicting each person's fantasy as accurately as possible. This process of establishing a trusting conversation in order to acquire personal information could take from a few hours to several months; depending on the person or the topics revealed. Sometimes, these dialogues could be very revealing and a means to discover new traits of their personality. As I try to put it into picture form, the image shows something that would have been impossible to fully describe otherwise. This section grew so much that I had to create several sub-categories and give it its own website under the temporary "Read the profile" domain name.

These days, alongside this project, I work on the mapping-out of sites suffering from light-pollution.











STANISLAS ALLEAUME





Stanislas Alleaume is a 29 years-young photographer, born in Nancy (France) now living in Paris. After finishing his studies in applied arts in Condé, he leaves for the French capital to pursue studies in game design, which he will soon abandon to slowly start photography “out of curiosity”. Fascinated by the dark universe of Francis Bacon or Otto Dix and the works of Paolo Roversi, Erwin Olaf or Billy Kidd, he creates his own lookbook. Time passes, orders start to come in. An agency for which he used to work as a model, commissions him to do test shoots for their male models.

Who better than him can talk about his work ?

« The mingling of the human form in architecture or nature is really what defines my work. I love the photographic freedom that one can enjoy within the fashion industry, even though it can be very demanding. In my modelling career, I always tried to approach photographers to offer my services as their assistant and had several short experiences until I met Rainer Torrado. He introduced me to several big creators like Jean-Paul Gaultier, with whom we created their lookbooks as well as the shootings of his fashion shows. For the last few months I have worked with François Rousseau, which is a very enjoyable experience, as it is the best learning opportunity there is. The quality of his work enabled me to make progress in many areas, in particular in the variety of subjects, lighting installations and the managing or day-to-day organisation required to lead large projects. »





“

PHOTOGRAPHY
IS A BRIEF
COMPLICITY
BETWEEN
FORESIGHT
AND CHANCE

John Stuart Mill



MICHAEL STOKES









MICHAEL STOKES

Biographie

Michael Michael Stokes is an American photographer from Berkeley (California), who was first known for his achievements with the swimming team of Santa Monica University College after graduating with a Bachelors Degree in Applied Arts. In 1983 he leaves Berkeley for Los Angeles to finish his studies in Production and Photography. After graduating, he puts his artistic talent on pause for a while; working in real estate until 2005 when he comes back to art to focus exclusively on photography. Since then, a lot of his work was published in magazines or fashion campaigns and he still spends a lot of time as one of the official photographers for the swimming American Masters.

Michael focuses his work mainly on the male body. He is recognised for his photographs of wounded Marine Veterans back from Iraq or Afghanistan. In this particular project he associated with David Hume Kennerly, who became famous for his photographs taken during the Vietnam War.



His photography hints on the erotic tension of the male nude body. Shooting in full colours, his models can be partly dressed or naked, in a studio or staged in richly-decorated clichéd situations for raw and provoking images. They are usually athletes, soldiers, policemen or lovers he sometimes dares to shoot in erotically-charged, even explicitly aroused poses but never crossing the pornographic threshold. The imagery is strong, the stories he tells are captivating and always singular.



*These two pictures are from a series Michael shot on the same day in the metro tunnels of Los Angeles. A **real county sherrif** approached him while he was shooting the two models, asking Michael to take a picture of him with his mobile phone. Michael replied he would accept only if he took the picture with his own camera. The policeman agreed on the condition that his face would not be shown on the final picture. A few minutes later, a homeless man who had been sleeping in that tunnel made the same request...*



ALEXANDRE EUSTACHE



Alexandre Eustache is a French photographer, born in February 1988, currently living in Paris. For several years now, he's specialised in Fashion, Portrait and Nude photography.

Upon finishing his studies in applied arts, he discovers a passion for imagery and begins to teach himself photography as he goes along. He enrolls in a three-year program as an apprentice in a photography school, whilst furthering his techniques in a famous Parisian studio. He obtains his photography CAP (Certificate of Professional Aptitude) and with the support of his former teachers, he achieves an honours degree from the Chamber of Trades.

He then leaves for Australia where he works in two studios, one of them being The Photo Studio of Sydney.

His style is brilliant and impactful. Halfway between cognitive dissonance and visual harmony, the contrast is coupled with a multitude of colours. With Alexandre the colour-span is wide and the light is diverse. The poses are theatrical and sublimed by old-fashioned aesthetics both strong and sensitive at the same time. Post-production techniques are clearly visible yet masterfully contained.

The "Jesus-Christ" series (pages 175 to 177) came out of his passion for Renaissance painting. For the composition of this picture, beyond the intricate staging of cloth in movement and the overall positioning within the picture's frame it is his work with light which transcends these pictures. The light source is at the very centre, emanating from Jesus Christ and being reflected on the men surrounding him. This particular picture is a montage of multiple shots taken over several sessions.

His series called "Figures noires" (Black silhouettes) on pages 178 to 184 came as a result of ancient Greek ceramics where black figures can be found representing hunting, narrative or mythological scenes. The idea was to play with light and its reflection on the completely black body. After contacting a professional dancer and oiling his body, he managed to obtain a sculptural silhouette mirroring the Greek's patterns.

Alexandre is now back in France and wishes to pursue a career in Fashion photography – his original interest. While still working on his giant frescoes' projects. He's currently working on a series inspired by transformation, evolution and change.





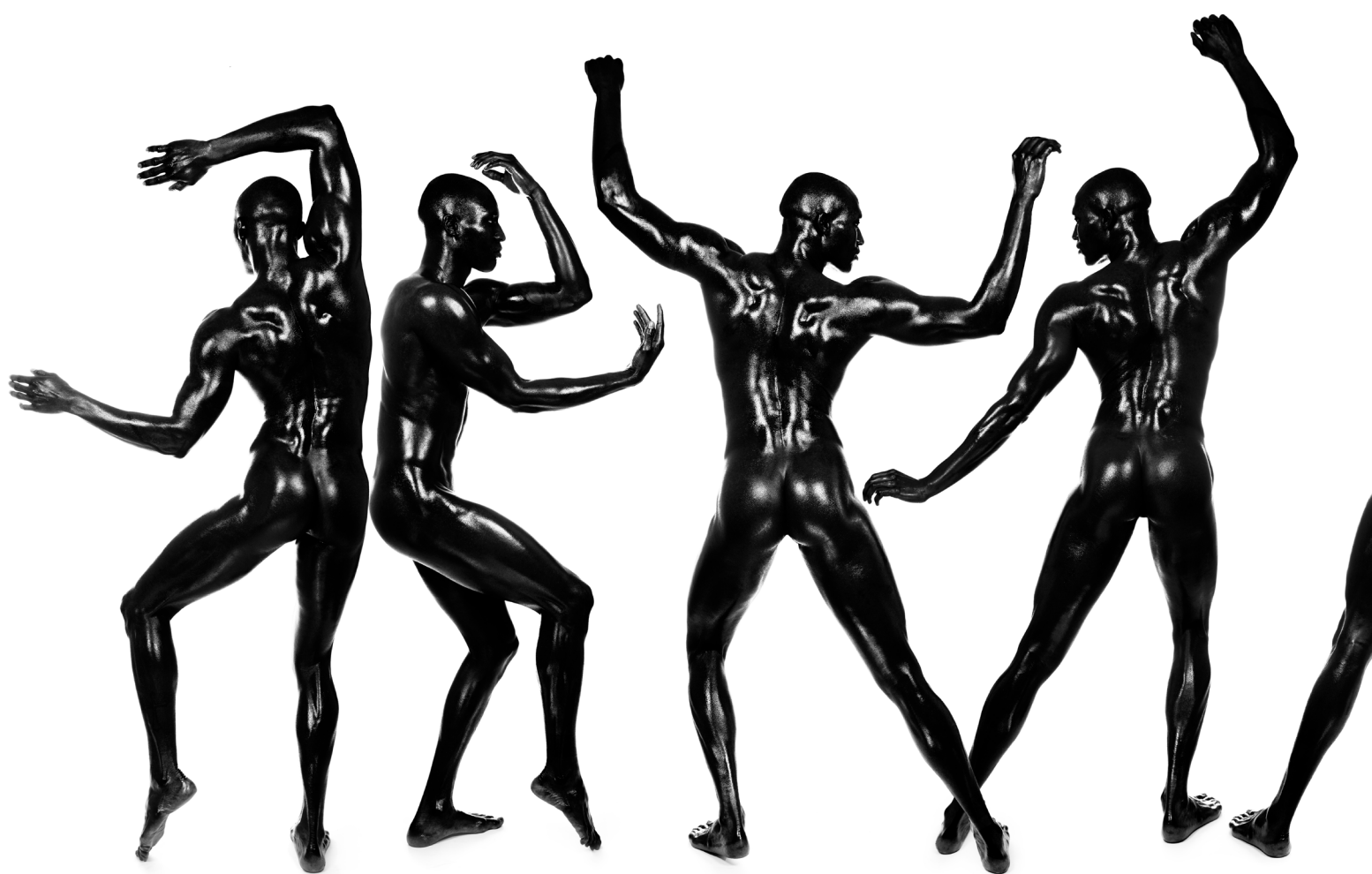


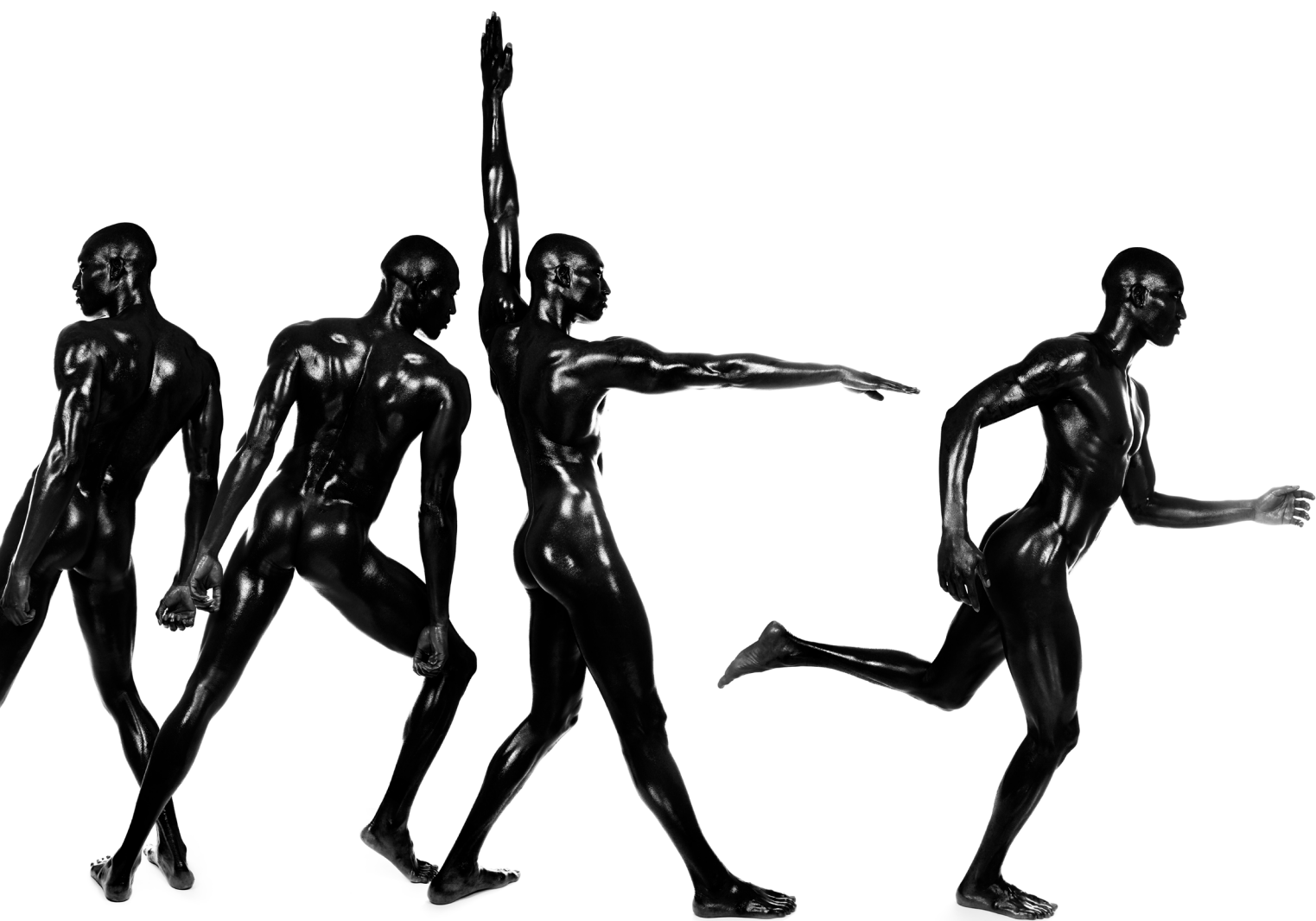
« Beauty is a vast concept. I remember seeing a young Asian girl in the Parisian metro. Her face had been scarred by burning. I found her very interesting and rather beautiful. I also like albinos, even more so if they are African. I love the difference in people who stand out from the others, physically speaking. But it is true that, as a general rule, skin texture is very important to me. To have beautiful skin is a sign of beauty to me. »















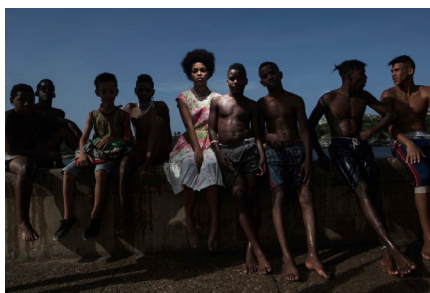




FORMENTO & FORMENTO

“She is Cuba” is the latest project to come out of the artistic couple, exploring Havana and revealing a feeling of sadness and expectation. Between the crumbling walls of its colonial architecture, its rundown streets, its abandoned cinemas and all of its glory of yester years, the Formento duo created an elegiac atmosphere surrounding a vibrant Cuban heroine, staging Castro’s declining era, the imminent change with its accompanying anxiety, struggle and yet, hope. The book came out during the Art Basel contemporary art fair in Miami, in December 2014.

She is Cuba



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www.cojetage.com



LES PETITS FRENCHIES

Do you know “Les Petits Frenchies”? It’s the unavoidably hype shop bringing young French fashion artists and designers together. Halfway between e-shop and magazine, the concept born in 2012 serves as a springboard for young talents, creators and entrepreneurs in Fashion and Design representing over 70 brands. They offer everything from bobo clothing accessories to interior-design items and re-invented bamboo (or precious wood) skateboards. In addition to their trendy webzine full of interviews, reviews and fashion lookbooks, Les Petits Frenchies have recently opened their own showroom, in the Passage du Bourg l’Abbé, in Paris. If you’re looking for the latest 100% frenchy fashion accessory, this is the place to go:

www.petitsfrenchies.com
15 Passage du Bourg l’Abbé, 75002 PARIS

49.90 €



THE MONOLITH

The Monolith is a structure with a purpose. Mysterious at first glance, it easily turns into ten chairs surrounding a table. This creation's goal was to get rid of the existing expected single-minded function of the dining room. The table top is mounted on rails and a custom-made hinge allows the two segments to unfold into a full sized table. The chairs are also hinged, thus allowing to be easily folded and stowed under the table.

10 chairs
Table dim. 250 x 74 x 45 cm
Mirror effect polished stainless steel

Price on demand



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www.arcanerum.com

33.00 €

THE CLOUD

The Cloud is an interactive lighting / speaker system designed to imitate a storm. Thanks to motion sensors, the Cloud detects people's presence and movements, creating lightning and thunder for a unique show. The speakers can be used to play music sent via any Bluetooth-compatible device. The Cloud can adapt to ambient light intensity and tone and has added features such as interaction with music and night-light function.

pprox. dimensions (each cloud is unique)
Circa 72 x 35 x 33 cm
Supplied with remote control, 2.1 speakers' system, available in several colours

2,618 €



ROOM WITH A VIEW

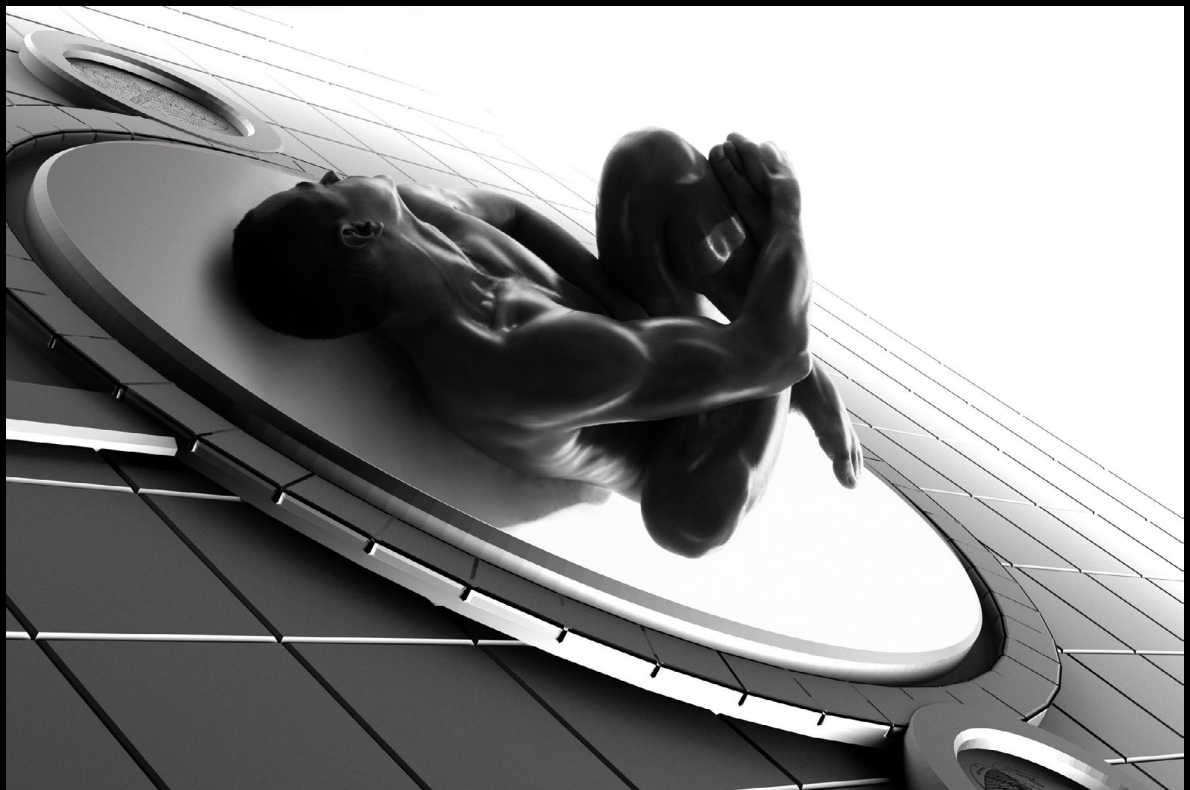


Artist : Vitor Manon
Model : Ametonyo Silva

In an effort to engage our readers and to serve as a pulpit for young talents (experienced or not), we offer a section for any new editorial collaboration. Do not hesitate to submit your best photos to: redaction@incarnatio.fr for possible publication in our next issue.



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Artist : Gianni Candido
Model : Kryz



Artist : Ted Sun



Artist : Quentin Caffier



Artist : Marina Brunetto



Artist : Gilles de Beauchêne

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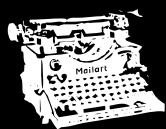


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